

Found an online source you think looks good? Put it to the test!

CHECKLIST FOR EVALUATING INTERNET SOURCES: Ask yourself these questions about each Internet source you find. You should be able to answer yes to all or most of these. If you cannot, then don't use that source.

Directions: Read each question while visiting the website. Put a check mark in the appropriate "yes" or "no" column below.

Article title: _____

Web/URL address: <http://> _____

YES	NO	Conditions:
		1. Is this site an .edu, .org, .gov or .mil site? These are sites which are generally the most reliable ones. Commercial (.com) site contain advertising and articles which may have opinions/views that are slanted one way or another.
		2. Is the author a well-known expert, perhaps connected with an established institution? Remember, anyone can put anything on the Internet, so you do not want to believe something just because it is online any more than you want to believe something just because it is in print.
		3. Is the publisher a university, professional organization, government agency, or well-known publisher? Avoid publishers that exist only on the Internet. There are so-called vanity publishers on the Internet whom people pay to publish their material. There are also organizations such as cults and other groups that establish Web sites just to promote their own philosophies.
		4. Do the hyperlinks given take you to other educational sites? When a hyperlink is provided from the main site, are they also .edu, .org, .gov or .mil sites?
		5. Is a bibliography provided which shows high quality sources? A site containing research-based material should contain bibliographic information (just like what you're being asked to do for your paper) listing the other sources they referenced from which they took their information.
		6. Is there a recent publication date showing that the information is correct? If the site hasn't been maintained or "last updated" recently, then you may want to look elsewhere for a more recent source. Outdated sources could contain information that has since then been proven incorrect and/or elaborated even more. Go find the most recent ones—they're the most relevant.
		7. Is the information given based on facts rather than opinions of the author? Remember that anyone can put anything on the Internet without having to back-up what he/she says with factual information. Beware of information that is clearly written to persuade you into believing what the author wants you to believe. As just one example of this, stay away from community forum/ reviews.
		8. Is the information written for people who are seriously interested? Beware of information you get from chat lines or public forums, which may include Wikipedia.
Total Yes" _____	Total "No" _____	** If you were able to <u>check "yes" for at least 6 of the 8</u> conditions above, you're free to use the site safely! ☺ If not... sorry, you need to find another online source! **